



GOLDEN GURUS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Section 1: Golden Gurus Program

1.1 What is the Golden Gurus Program?

The Golden Gurus Program is an initiative of the Australian Government arising from an idea at the 2020 Summit, and developed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). It recognises the loss to the community of the skills and experience of mature age people who are retiring from the workforce. The program invites these people to become volunteer mentors to support the growth and development of people working for community organisations and in small business.

The Volunteering SA & NT (VSA&NT) program will provide support to community organisations and will not involve small business. The program offers a new form of volunteering for people aged 50+, who are retired or semi retired to become Golden Gurus (skilled mentors). Golden Guru mentors will be experienced people, possessing good listening skills, be empathetic and have good relationship building skills. Not only will they be carefully screened, but will also receive training and support relevant to their role. The Golden Gurus will not provide advice or specific skills training.

Our Golden Gurus will be available to mentor paid staff, working for Community organisations that are financial members of VSA&NT. This is a great opportunity for those people taking on new responsibilities, to have additional support resources. An example could be a newly appointed Volunteer Manager looking for support from an experienced person outside the organisation, to act as a sounding board for ideas and to help build their confidence.

For more information on the program visit – www.deewr.gov.au/goldengurus

1.2 Who is Volunteering SA & NT Inc?

VSA&NT is a community organisation. It is the peak body representing volunteers and volunteer involving organisations in South Australia and the Northern Territory. Its mission is to promote and celebrate volunteering and play a key leadership role in advancing volunteering by providing an extensive range of services, support and resources for some 600,000 volunteers and 2000 volunteer organisations. VSA&NT has strong networks with regional volunteer services and volunteer involving organisations locally, nationally and internationally.

To gain an understanding of the services provided by VSA&NT visit - www.volunteering.sa.org.au

Go to Our Work / Programs.

1.3 What is mentoring?

There are many ideas about what mentoring means, some examples are:

- “an experienced person [providing] guidance and support in a variety of ways to the developing novice... in addition to being a role model, [acting] as a guide, tutor, or coach, and a confidante” (Bolton, 1980)ⁱ
- “individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to their protégé’s careers” (Ragins 1997)ⁱⁱ

1.4 What is VSA&NT’s role in the Golden Gurus program?

VSA&NT has been approved by the Australian Government as a Golden Gurus **MEMBER ORGANISATION** to provide a program in South Australia and the Northern Territory.

As a Member Organisation VSA&NT manages the;

- marketing of the Golden Gurus Program to its members in South Australian and the Northern Territory,
- recruitment and training of volunteer mentors – known as **GOLDEN GURUS**,
- applications from people working in **COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS** who are looking for mentors to assist with either their own professional development or for a staff member they manage - referred to as **SUITABLE GOLDEN GURUS OPPORTUNITIES**,
- process of matching the person to receive the support, the **MENTOREE**, with a Golden Guru,
- ongoing management of the program and the Golden Guru/Mentoree relationship through a **GOLDEN GURUS COORDINATOR** – a voluntary position within VSA&NT.



1.4 What is ‘Out of Scope’ of the Golden Gurus Program?

The VSA&NT Golden Gurus Program will not provide mentors to small business, it will focus solely on Community Organisations. Golden Gurus will be volunteers and will not be paid to participate in the program. Golden Gurus under the VSA&NT program will not provide specific skills training nor will they offer advice.

1.5 How is the success of the program measured?

It is the responsibility of the **Golden Gurus Coordinator** to review the progress of a Golden Guru mentoring partnership every 3 to 6 months. Both the Golden Guru mentor and the recipient of the mentoring will be included in the review. The outcome of the review will inform;

- continuation or cancellation of the partnership, or
- modification of the partnership (communication, meetings, expectations) to better meet the needs of both parties.

The factors that we believe will create success for this program include:

- Careful selection, induction and training of the Golden Gurus,
- A managed matching process ,
- Ongoing support and ongoing training of the Golden Gurus,
- Having agreements with clearly defined goals, time lines and commitments agreed to by all parties, and
- a systematic review process.

Section 2: Golden Guru Mentors

2.1 What do Golden Guru mentors do?

The Golden Guru mentor supports an individual working within a Community Organisation with their professional development and to achieve their work goals. For example Golden Gurus may:

- Help the Mentoree think through decisions, explore new ideas and see things from a different perspective.
- Listen to, and be a sounding board for, the mentoree's ideas, hopes, goals and problems.
- Share examples of life experiences, empathise and encourage the mentoree.
- Assist the metoree to identify areas for self-development, skills improvement and training.
- Help the mentoree to source information that will help them achieve their goals.
- Provide motivation and assist with building confidence for the mentoree.

2.2 Do I need specific work skills and experience to become a Golden Guru?

No. You will bring your life skills and work experience to the role. Matching with a Mentoree will be based on such things as interests, location, and the time commitment required.

2.3 Who can become a Golden Guru?

As an indication Golden Gurus should:

- Be 50+ years of age,
- Be retired or semi retired,
- Be willing to volunteer their time to support others,
- Have experience and knowledge they are prepared to share,
- Be a good listener, and

- Have good relationship skills and the ability to empathise with others.

2.4 How are Golden Gurus recruited and screened?

VSA&NT is actively targeting service clubs to recruit volunteer Golden Gurus; however anyone who feels they meet the requirements outlined in point 2.3 can register their interest to become a Golden Guru.

Golden Guru applicants are screened by VSA&NT using best practice procedures for volunteer management which includes:

- Police clearance,
- Review of an Expression of Interest to become a Golden Guru (form available on the VSA&NT website),
- Reference check of at least 2 professional referee's, and an
- Interview with Golden Gurus Coordinator.

2.5 What formal agreements exist for the Golden Gurus?

- a) Successful Golden Guru applicants will sign an agreement with VSA&NT outlining the expectations of their volunteer role including;
- Terms and Conditions (duration, time commitment)
 - Responsibilities – Position Description
 - Code of conduct, for example;
 - Not providing advice
 - Not making decisions on another person's behalf or pressuring another person to take a certain course of action
 - Not providing psychological counselling
 - Not divulging confidential information provided to you as part of the voluntary relationship to others

Golden Gurus are volunteers with VSA&NT and are therefore required to comply with all VSA&NT policies and procedures.

- b) Once an agreed match is made, the Community Organisation receiving the services of Golden Guru mentoring will sign an agreement with VSA&NT outlining the terms of the arrangement. The Mentoree and the Golden Guru will co-sign the agreement.

2.6 What training is provided for Golden Gurus?

Free training on a range of topics is available to Golden Gurus:

- Online training specifically for the Golden Gurus program is provided by DEEWR.
- New volunteer induction is provided by VSA&NT
- VSA&NT also offers a range of free training courses and workshops facilitated by professional trainers covering topics such as:
 - Introduction to Mentoring
 - Building Conflict Resolution Skills
 - Supervision and Leadership Skills Development
 - Skills for Committee and Board Members

In addition, Golden Gurus will find opportunities for personal and professional development arise through networking opportunities including;

- Golden Gurus peer group meetings – sharing experiences and learning from other Golden Gurus, and
- Community Organisation – meeting new people and exposure to new work sectors.

2.7 What is the expected time commitment for the Golden Guru?

One of the attractions of this volunteer Program is the degree of flexibility with the time commitment jointly agreed between the Golden Gurus and the Community Organisation / Mentoree.

For example a typical commitment would be for 4 to 8 hours per month for a 6 to 12 month period to;

- Meet and communicate with the Mentoree,
- Attend peer group meetings with other Golden Gurus,
- Communicate with the Golden Gurus Coordinator, and
- Undertake online training provided by DEEWR and attend VSA&NT training workshops, as requested.

2.8 What protection is provided for the Golden Gurus Mentor?

The Golden Gurus will be volunteers of VSA&NT and as such they will be provided with volunteer insurance protection, including Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance, which will cover them when they are undertaking their approved volunteer role.

Volunteers in South Australia, are also protected through the Volunteer Protection Act 2001. Refer to www.legislation.sa.gov.au

2.9 Costs

The opportunity to be involved in the program is free, for both the Golden Guru and the Community Organisation receiving the mentoring service. VSA&NT may reimburse the Golden Gurus for transport costs incurred while undertaking their volunteer role as per VSA&NT's policies. As outlined in the Golden Gurus' agreement, any additional costs required, will not be covered by VSA&NT.

2.10 I want to become a Golden Guru - What do I do?

The process starts with registering your interest and proceeds through an approval process:

- **Complete** a “**Expression of Interest**” form (available on the VSA&NT website).
- **Send** (email, fax, post) form to the VSA&NT Golden Gurus Coordinator.
- **Attend** an Interview with the Golden Gurus Coordinator.
- **Provide** the names of at least 2 professional referees.
- **Submit** a National Police Check Application (through VSA&NT, at no cost to you). The Police check will be returned directly to you.
- **Provide** your completed police check for the Golden Gurus Coordinator to sight and a copy for your file.

Approval to participate in VSA&NT Golden Gurus program is based on your application, interview and satisfactory police and referee checks.

- **Complete** the “Introduction to Golden Gurus” online training.
- **Attend** an induction to VSA&NT.
- **Provide** permission for the Golden Gurus Coordinator to share your profile, when a suitable Golden Gurus Opportunity is identified.
- **Agree** to a match between you and a Mentoree working for a Community Organisation - with agreement of all parties.
- **Sign** agreement.
- **Start** mentoring!

Please note there is no guarantee that all Golden Gurus will be actively involved in providing mentoring. Golden Gurus opportunities will be dependent on the demand for mentoring services and the matching process will depend on the suitability of the individual Golden Guru.

Section 3: Recipients of Golden Guru Mentoring (Mentoree)

3.1 Who can receive support from a Golden Gurus mentor?

VSA&NT provides Golden Gurus mentors as part of its membership service. The opportunity to be involved in the program is free, for both the Golden Guru and the Community Organisation receiving the mentoring service. The program is open for **paid staff** of **Community Organisations** that are **financial members of VSA&NT**. This is a great opportunity for individuals who are new to the organisation, or who have a new role within their existing organisation to have a supportive mentor who is external to the organisation and is willing to share their knowledge and experience. You can be confident the information you share is confidential to the Golden Guru and will not be divulged to a third party. The needs of the mentoree and role of the Golden Guru in achieving these goals will be outlined in an agreement.

3.2 Will my Golden Guru provide specific skills training?

No. Specific work skills training is not part of this program and would normally be provided within the mentoree’s own organisation, or by a “buddy” working in a similar role, in another organisation. Golden Gurus will provide an external, supportive and ongoing relationship.

3.3 Is there a formal agreement with VSA&NT?

Once an agreed match is made, the Community Organisation receiving the services of Golden Guru mentoring will sign an agreement with VSA&NT outlining;

- Terms and Conditions (duration, time commitment)
- Expected outcome of the program
- Grievance policy
- Code of conduct for the mentoree
- Review process

The Mentoree and the Golden Guru will co-sign the agreement.

In addition, the Mentoree will be bound by the policies and procedures of their employer.

3.3 I would like to receive mentoring from a Golden Guru - What do I do?

The process starts with registering your interest and proceeds through the matching process:

- **Research** the program using the VSA&NT and DEEWR web sites and the Golden Gurus Coordinator.
- **Discuss** the program with your workplace manager and obtain their approval to participate in the program
- **Complete** a “Request for a Golden Guru” form (available on the VSA&NT website).
- **Send** (email, fax, post) the form to the VSA&NT Golden Gurus Coordinator.
- **Attend** an Interview with the Golden Gurus Coordinator to determine your specific needs.
- **Review** profiles provided by the Golden Gurus Coordinator, of Golden Gurus whose skills and experience match your professional development.
- **Discuss** your Golden Guru preferences with the Golden Gurus Coordinator.
- **Select** your Golden Guru – with agreement of all parties.
- **Sign** program agreement.
- **Start** program!

3.4 Glossary of Terms

Member Organisation*	An organisation (whose primary purpose is to provide an altruistic service that benefits the community) that meets the Quality Standards and has been accepted by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations as a member of the Golden Gurus Community.
Community Organisation*	A community organization that has been assessed by a Member Organisation as suitable for the program and has been connected to receive the voluntary support of a Golden Guru. <i>VSA&NT has determined that eligible community organisations under its Golden Gurus program, will be Community Organisations that are members of VSA&NT.</i>
Golden Gurus - within the VSA&NT Program	A Golden Guru is a skilled Mature Age Person who has been assessed by VSA&NT as being suitable for the program and has been appropriately connected in a voluntary capacity with a Community Organisation. The Golden Guru will

	mentor a paid staff member in the Community Organisation.
Mature Age Person*	A person who is aged 50 years or over.
Mentoree	An individual who is a paid staff member of a Community Organisation who is to requesting mentoring support from a Golden Guru.
Golden Gurus Coordinator	A Volunteer within VSA&NT whose role is to manage the Golden Guru program.

* Source: DEEWR

3.5 Who do I contact to become involved?

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ⁱ Bolton, EB 1980 as cited in R.J. Burke & C.A. McKeen 1990, “Mentoring in organizations: Implications for women”, Journal of Business Ethics, vol.9, pp. 317 -332

ⁱⁱ Rolfe, A 2009, Mentoring-works, Umina Beach, viewed 29 June 2009, ,<http://mentoring-works.com/index.html>>